

## Abstract 547

**TITLE:** Replication of a Successful Intervention with HighRisk Adolescent Girls

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**ISSUE:** Replicating an intervention program may help clarify key components responsible for the success of the program. The extent to which program components must be changed to adapt to different environments helps identify those program design factors that most impact on the success or failure of the program.

**SETTING:** Bronx AIDS Services (BAS) is replicating a previously conducted intervention for high-risk adolescent girls, targeting girls aged 12-15 from the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) in the Bronx. Adolescent girls in DJJ are from single parent homes (72%), mostly African American (53%) and Latina (17%), with an average grade point average of C or below (64%).

**PROJECT:** The Girls' Mentoring Program is a multifaceted HIV/STD/Substance Use intervention consisting of weekly group sessions from a Freire-based, harm reduction and life skills curriculum developed specifically for this program. Participants also meet weekly with adult mentors for support through creative writing, addressing the emotional issues related to the weekly group topics. The original program was created at New Mexico AIDS Services with 38 high-risk girls, aged 12-15, from Albuquerque. The original group was 61% Latina, 18% African American, 10% Native American, 3% white and 8% of mixed origin. BAS is currently implementing this program, with a focus on the process of replication.

**RESULTS:** Data for the original program was collected through focus groups and a written questionnaire, with regard to risk behaviors of violence, sex, substance use and poor stress management. After 1 year, participants showed statistically significant changes ( $p < 0.05$ ) in stress related drug use, internalization of the consequences of drug use, sex behaviors, hitting family members and strangers, fighting with weapons, gang fighting, and fighting when high or drunk. Bronx AIDS Services is using similar instruments for evaluation, combining the self-reported data with objective data, such as school records and juvenile justice records.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** Success in replicating a program appears to be little affected by dramatic differences in physical settings if underlying norms for the targeted population are similar.

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